Stone Henge

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by Reported_MIA

Summary

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Or it could just be the way Robby's looking at him. That would do it, too.

Notes

my loveliest friends!! ask and you shall recieve <3 <3 <3!!!

first of all, i'd like to say that i'm so, so beyond grateful for everyone's overwhelming support, especially on the last entry. i wish i could tell you all individually how thankful i am without sounding like a broken record, so i have to do it here instead of combusting.

second of all, i think this is the perfect time (nvm that ive been forgetting to do it for like ten fics now) to plug in my the writing tumblr i made! the name's queersyourgender amigos, feel free to drop by with anything you'd like to say, even if it's just a hello!!

thank you for reading my long ass A/N to the end :3c. onto the fic!!

When Frank comes to and finds himself lying on his back in a hospital bed, he understandably freaks the fuck out.

The last time he'd been in this position, blinking his eyes open to a ceiling that felt too white, too *clean,* his entire life had been changed. T-boned by a semi-truck on an interstate by a poor hard-working driver that had been awake for just a few hours too long. The guy was completely fine, obviously, but Frank hadn't been, and when he woke up, thought he was never going to be again.

Years of chronic pain, one of which had gotten so bad he resorted to diverting from his workplace to fuel an addiction he had been too blind to see. A marriage with a woman who kept looking at him differently whenever he needed her help, kids who didn't know any better, coworkers who teased him for trying too hard.

This *feeling.* The sterile sheets. The IV drip. The slight pull of a bandage tape on his arm.

It sends a jolt of terror up his spine.

His heart monitor spikes as his eyes snap wide open, his breath catching hard in his throat. Once he's able to overcome the absolute paralysis he'd woken up in, he shoots up like a bullet. Or at least, he tries to, but instead immediately chokes on a violent and dry cough.

“Frank!” A familiar voice calls out from beside him, the same exact one that had been there beside him after the crash, and all it does is make him panic even harder. Especially as a hand settles itself on his shoulder and pushes him back on the bed. “Frank, hey! Hey, hey, it's okay, you're okay!”

Another hand settles over his knee. Another on his arm, from the other side. A pair of gentle palms cup his face carefully, like they were cradling a delicate prized possession.

He blinks.

Yolanda's face is the first one that comes into view, because she's the one that's half on top of him and holding his face in her hands. She's got her gaze fixed on his, her intense eyes calm and *knowing,* as though she knows exactly what he's thinking, where he was.

His eyes glance around wildly, his heart still racing too quickly in his chest. The hand on his right shoulder is Trinity's, who looks like she's

been to hell and back, for some reason. On his left is Dennis, who horrifyingly looks as though he'd been fucking *crying*. By his legs is Mel, squeezing his knee so hard he worries she's going to pop his patella out of place.

“Easy, Frank,” a gruff voice says from directly opposite to him, and Frank's eyes snap in that direction to find Robby, clutching the foot of the bed in a tight white-knuckled grip that threatens to shatter hospital property. “Breathe. You're alright.”

Frank blinks again, but none of them vanish into thin air like he expects them to. Why the hell is half the Goddamn staff of their hospital in his room? If they're all here, who the fuck is working? He strains his memory, tries to think of the last thing he can recall before now, but his brain is too frazzled. Naturally, it can only mean one thing.

“Am I dead?”

Trinity laughs, a short and breathless thing that's laced with both relief and fury. “No, but you sure gave it your best fucking shot, you prick,” she hisses at him, full of heat and upset. “You know what your temp was when I brought you in? 104.6 degrees. Why didn't you say anything? Are you stupid?”

“Trinity, come on,” Dennis tries to placate her from his other side, ever the mediator, as he gives a small sniffle and wipes at his eye with the back of his free hand. “You had pneumonia, Frank. It was severe. *Really* severe. You were… You were practically septic.”

Frank winces. Jesus.

He must've said that outloud, because Mel gives him a solemn nod, her lips pulled into a small and angry-looking pout. “Yes,” she confirms stiffly, and oh, she's *mad* at him, actually. “It was very, very bad, so I don't think you should joke about being dead after that.”

He gives her a sheepish smile, rather than explain the fact that he *hadn't* been trying to make a joke. His eyes drift back to Robby, wondering if he's also going to pitch in on the let's-lecture-Frank party everyone seems to be having.

He doesn't. He just keeps staring at him with a look Frank can't for the life of him read.

Somehow, that's worse.

He lays back down onto the pillows, letting Yolanda fix up his hair for him without complaint, knowing that she's probably doing it more for her own sake than his. She's the only one not in scrubs, which mortifyingly means that this woman left the comfort of her own home on her day off to come see his dumbass almost die from pneumonia, of all fucking things.

With a sigh, he turns his head to the side to look at Trinity, now calm enough to realize that he actually very much still feels like garbage. “What even happened?” He asks her, because now that he can think, he honestly can't remember anything beyond them leaving for work that morning. “You said you brought me in?”

Trinity's lips suddenly lift slightly, and though he'd ordinarily like to see her smile, something about the mischievous glint that shines in her eye at his innocent question unsettles him. “Oh yeah, I brought you in alright,” she says in a weirdly playful tone. “I carried you in *bridal style.”*

Frank blanches. “You're lying.”

She grins wider. “Nope. Singular cluster of grapes, by the way.”

“Oh my *God,”* he groans, moving his hands up to his face so he can hide the way his face turns a bright red behind them. “I'm never living this down, am I?”

“Never, pretty boy.”

Mel giggles softly at their interaction, seemingly much more pleased with that kind of joking. “Now that you're awake, I'm going to see if there's anything edible in the cafeteria for you,” she tells him, gently pushing her chair back and getting to her feet. “You must be starving.”

“I'll go with you,” Dennis says, then turns to Yolanda with a look that tells Frank that she's maybe been in this room with him for a little too long. “Dr. Garcia, come with us?”

She laughs, giving the kid an endeared look for his efforts. “You can use my name, buddy. I don't bite.”

Dennis smiles nervously. “Right… Yolanda,” he offers, so awkward and stilted that it makes Frank snort into his hands, shaking his head fondly at his oldest friend. It wouldn't be her if she didn't go about terrorizing people.

As the three walk out of the room together, Trinity slaps her hands against her knees and also gets to her feet. “I, on the other hand,” she announces loudly, *far* too loudly to not be suspicious, “am going to go to the bathroom to freshen up. Y'know, since I got a surprise work-out today. Kind of. Barely. Anyways, see ya!”

It's with belated horror that Frank realizes what she's just done, which is leave him alone with Robby.

The attending watches her zip out of the door with an unamused look, clearly conveying how *not subtle* that was. She all but flips him off, glaring in a way that screams *be grateful, asshole* as she clicks the door shut behind her to give them some privacy. It bathes the room in a silence so heavy it makes it difficult to breathe again.

Or it could just be the way Robby's looking at him. That would do it, too.

They stare at one another for a moment, and when it's clear that Robby won't break the quiet first, Frank takes it upon himself to do it instead. “You're here,” he says softly, watching the other's expression while trying to school his own.

Robby's eyes go impossibly soft, tinged with just a hint of bewilderment. “Of course I am,” he replies quickly, as if it's the most obvious thing in the world. As if it's ridiculous that Frank could even think of otherwise, much less suggest it. “Where else would I be?”

Far away from me, he wants to say, but the words get stuck in his throat. Even now, when he knows how Robby feels, what he thinks of him, he can't bring himself to say it outloud. It feels like an admission. It feels like it would make it *real.*

“You *stayed,”* is what he winds up saying instead, because Robby's always been a pillar of support for the people around him. It doesn't surprise him that he showed up for him, even if there's a million other places he would rather be. What doesn't make sense is the fact that he *stayed.*

The older man watches him closely, like he knows what's running through his mind and wants to be careful of his response. “I did,” he says simply, easy and matter-of-fact. Then, Robby sighs, looking down at the ground for a moment before lifting his head to lock their eyes again.

“You scared the *shit* out of me, Frank.”

He can't help the way his eyes widen, because that's… He didn't expect that. He wasn't sure what he expected, but it wasn't that. That earnest confession, in that trembling voice, with those hopeful eyes. Absolutely none of that is what he thought he had in the cards waiting for him.

And yet that's exactly what he's given as Robby watches him with an expression close to *pleading.* "You were so *pale,"* he tells him, sounding nothing short of *haunted* by the memory. "White as a sheet. When Trinity brought you in and you weren't— weren't *moving,* I thought…"

Frank immediately braces for impact, knowing good and well what his next words are going to be. *I thought you'd relapsed,* he'd tell him, his face shifting to aggravated disappointment, like he's not sure how he feels that it *didn't* end up being a relapse.

"I thought you did something to yourself."

And there it— wait, *what?*

"What?" He can't hold himself back from saying, his eyes wide and disbelieving as he looks back at Robby's equally big eyes. Except while his are widened with shock, Robby's are widened with complete and utter *relief.*

"You don't hear yourself sometimes, Frank," he starts explaining, except it explains absolutely nothing, and his face must show his confusion because the other shakes his head and continues. "The way you talk about yourself… You talk like you're this… expendable, *disposable* person. You walk around like nobody would care if you were gone."

Frank's mouth opens and closes in an impressive, ten-out-of-ten impression of a dying fish out of water, no sound coming out of him, throat too tight to produce any. Yet somehow, Robby isn't even *finished* with him, isn't done rendering him speechless, because he pulls up one of the many chairs around his bed and sits next to him.

And then he reaches for one of his shaking hands, and holds it *tight.*

"But that's *not true,"* Robby tells him, *begs* him almost, like putting so much strength behind his words like he's *desperate* for them to get through to him. Frank doesn't know what his face is doing, but Robby's hand squeezes his own as he doubles down. "It's *not,* Frank. You're *nowhere near* disposable, and everyone that was just in this room would care if *anything* happened to you. I mean, fuck, something

did happen to you, and *everybody lost it.”*

He blinks, a small noise of disbelief finally making it out of him. Robby laughs, humorlessly, just a sharp exhale of air. “You should've seen it. Trinity wouldn't stop pacing. Dennis couldn't stop crying. Melissa disappeared for an entire hour when you got brought in. And Yolanda almost fucking *killed* me when I wouldn't let her see you the second you were stable.”

For some reason, Frank feels something in his chest shift slightly. It doesn't quite click into place, but it moves ever so minutely, like a stone henge being pushed by a thousand men. Briefly, images of his friends’ reactions flash before his eyes, and they start to water slightly, because he can see it. Can see their concern, their love.

Robby's, too.

“Do you think you could stop talking for a second,” he finally chokes out, and before Robby could rear back from what he thinks is a rejection, tightens his grip around the older man's hand and tugs him ever closer. “Because if you keep talking, I'm going to start crying, and it's going to look fucking ugly as sin.”

Finally, *finally,* Robby's eyes lighten up slightly, wrinkling at the corners as he throws his head back and lets out a loud laugh. With his free hand, he reaches up for Frank's face and thumbs away at a stray tear that manages to slip past his careful control with a smile.

“Somehow,” he murmurs, “I doubt that.”

Frank's heart skips. The monitor beside them does, too. Robby laughs again.

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